2017 Pacific Northwest Bay-Watershed Education and Training

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: 2017 Pacific Northwest Bay-Watershed Education and Training

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NOS-ONMS-2017-2005088

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.429, Marine Sanctuary Program

Dates: Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m., Pacific Time on January 4th, 2017 to be considered for funding. Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply online through www.grants.gov.

When developing your submission timeline, keep in mind that it may take Grants.gov up to two business days to validate or reject the application and that an advance registration process is required that may take a few days or several weeks.

If Grants.gov has technical issues that prohibit submission or is otherwise impractical, hard copy applications will be accepted. Hard copies may be submitted by postal mail, commercial delivery service, or hand-delivery, but must be received (not postmarked) by 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time on January 4th, 2017. Hard copy applications arriving after the deadline given above will be accepted for review only if the applicant can document that the application was provided to a delivery service that guaranteed delivery prior to the specified closing date and time.

Funding Opportunity Description: NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary office) is seeking proposals under the Pacific Northwest B-WET Program (http://olympiccoast.noaa.gov/ocean_literacy/bwet.html). The Pacific Northwest B-WET Program is a competitive, environmental education, grants program that promotes locally relevant, experiential learning in the K-12 environment. Funded projects provide Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for students, related professional development for teachers, and help to support regional education and environmental priorities in the Pacific Northwest. This Federal funding opportunity meets NOAA's Mission Goal of healthy ocean ecosystems, helping to ensure that ocean, estuarine, and related ecosystems and the species that inhabit them are vibrant and sustainable in the face of challenges.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The Pacific Northwest NOAA Bay-Watershed Education and Training (PNW B-WET) Program is an environmental education program that supports experiential K-12 learning through local competitive grants. PNW B-WET (http://olympiccoast.noaa.gov/ocean_literacy/bwet.html) is part of the National B-WET Program (http://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet) found in each of the following geographic regions: Chesapeake Bay, California, Hawaiian Islands, New England, Gulf of Mexico, Pacific Northwest, and Great Lakes.

For the purposes of this solicitation, the Pacific Northwest region is defined as Oregon and Washington.

NOAA recognizes that knowledge and commitment built from firsthand experience, especially in the context of one's community and culture, is essential for achieving environmental stewardship. Carefully selected experiences driven by rigorous academic learning standards, engendering discovery and wonder, and nurturing a sense of community will further connect students with their watershed, help reinforce an ethic of responsible citizenship, and promote academic achievement. Experiential learning techniques, such as those supported by the NOAA B-WET Program, have been shown to increase interest in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), thus contributing to NOAA's obligations under the America Competes Act (33 USC 893a(a)).

DEFINING THE MEANINGFUL WATERSHED EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE (MWEE)

The primary delivery of B-WET is through competitive funding that promotes Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs). MWEEs are multi-stage activities that include learning both outdoors and in the classroom, and aim to increase the environmental literacy of all participants. Teachers should support students to investigate topics both locally and globally that are of interest to them, learn they have control over the outcome of environmental issues, identify actions available to address these issues, and understand the value of those actions. More information about the MWEE can be found here: www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet-mwee.pdf.

MWEEs are defined as follows:

1. Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for Students

MWEEs for students should be learner centered and focused on questions, problems, and issues to be investigated through collecting, analyzing and sharing data; learning protocols; exploring models; and examining natural phenomena. These activities, grounded in best practices and the context of the local community and culture, help increase student interest, motivation, and attitudes toward learning, and achieve environmental stewardship. As a result of the MWEE activities students should have an understanding of basic watershed concepts, as well as the interaction between natural systems (e.g. wildlife, plants, and water cycle) and social systems (e.g. communities, transportation systems, and schools), highlighting the connection between human activity and environmental conditions. MWEEs consist of multiple components as defined below.

> Issue definition and background research

Students focus on an environmental question, problem, or issue requiring background research and investigation. They learn more about the issue through classroom instruction, the collection of data, conducting experiments, talking to experts and reviewing credible publications. This process should be age appropriate with practices growing in complexity and sophistication across the grades, starting with educator guided investigation and progressing to student-led inquiry.

> Outdoor field activities

Students participate in multiple outdoor field activities sufficient to collect the data or make observations required for answering the research questions and informing student actions, or as part of the issue definition and background research. Students should be actively involved in planning the investigation, taking measurements, or constructing the project within appropriate safety guidelines, with teachers providing instruction on methods and procedures, data collection protocols, and proper use of equipment as needed. These activities can take place off-site and/or on the school grounds.

> Stewardship action projects

Students participate in an age appropriate project during which they take action to address environmental issues at the personal or societal level. Participants in B-WET MWEE activities should understand they have control over the outcome of environmental issues, be encouraged to identify actions to address these issues and understand the value of those actions. Examples of stewardship activities include: Watershed Restoration or Protection (e.g., create schoolyard habitat, planting trees or grasses, invasive species removal, community cleanup, storm water management); Everyday Choices (e.g., reduce/reuse/recycle/upcycle, composting, energy conservation, water conservation);

Community Engagement (e.g., presentations, social media, event-organizing, messaging at community events/fairs/festivals, mentoring, PSAs, flyers, posters); and Civic Action (e.g., town meetings, voting, writing elected officials/decision makers, advocating for policy change).

> Synthesis and conclusions
Students analyze and evaluate the results of projects and investigations. Students synthesize and communicate results and conclusions to an external audience such as other classrooms, schools, parents, or the community.

2. Support for Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) with Students

In addition to the components identified above, NOAA recommends that the following elements are in place to fully support successful MWEE implementation with students.

> Teacher participation for the duration of the MWEE
While external partners are entirely appropriate to support MWEEs, teachers should support the experience in the classroom and in the field. Teachers are in the best position to help students make connections and draw on past lessons, serve as environmental role models, and enhance students overall outdoor education experience and should be involved in all components of the experiences detailed above. To support them in this role, teachers should have appropriate knowledge of environmental issues and watershed concepts, skill in connecting these issues to their curriculum, and competency in environmental education pedagogy, including the ability and confidence to teach outdoor lessons and to lead students in critical thinking about environmental issues.

> Integration with classroom curriculum
Experiences should be integrated into what is occurring in the classroom, and can provide authentic, age appropriate, engaging multi-disciplinary content to address academic standards. Specifically, elements of science and social studies standards related to questioning and investigation, evidence-based analysis and interpretation, model and theory building, knowledge of environmental processes and systems, skill for understanding and addressing environmental issues, and personal and civic responsibility align well with MWEEs. Non-school activities may enrich traditional classroom curriculum when needed, though this need should be documented and supported by local education agencies.

> Use of the local context for learning
The local community and environment should be viewed as a primary resource for student MWEEs. Place-based education promotes learning that is rooted in the unique history,

environment, culture, economy, literature, and art of a students? schoolyard, neighborhood, town or community, and thus offering students and teachers the opportunity to explore how individual and collective decisions impact their immediate surroundings. Once a firm connection to their local environment is made, students are better positioned to expand their thinking to recognize the far-reaching implications of the decisions they make to the larger national and global environment.

> Experiences are a set of activities over time
The MWEE includes the full duration leading up to and following the outdoor field experiences. Each component should involve a significant investment of instructional time, incorporate time for reflection, and include all students. Experiences such as tours, simulations, demonstrations, or nature walks may be instructionally useful, but alone do not constitute an entire meaningful watershed educational experience as defined here.

> Includes NOAA assets, including personnel and resources
NOAA has a wealth of applicable products and services as well as a cadre of scientific and professional experts that can heighten the impact of environmental instruction both in the classroom and in the field. Additionally, environmental professionals can serve as important role models for career choices and stewardship. For more information about NOAA resources, please visit:
NOAA Assets: http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/grants/NOAA_assets.html
NOAA in Your Backyard:
http://www.education.noaa.gov/Special_Topics/NOAA_in_Your_Backyard.html

3. Teacher Professional Development for Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs)

Teachers should be skilled in using environmental education and MWEEs to address multiple subjects? curriculum standards and local education agency initiatives. In order to gain and maintain environmental education competencies, teachers need access to sustained, high quality professional development that includes ongoing support and feedback. Teachers should gain confidence in the value of MWEEs and strategies for conducting them so that they will conduct MWEES after the B-WET supported program has ended. Specifically, the following elements are recommended for professional development to support teachers implementing MWEEs:

> Increases teachers? knowledge and awareness of environmental issues
Teachers must have an adequate level of content knowledge for their MWEE topic area specific to their grade level and discipline, including an understanding of basic watershed

concepts and the human connection to the watershed. Recognizing that environmental issues often include different perspectives and opinions, teachers must also have a deep understanding of the facts related to environmental issues along with an understanding of the various stakeholder values. In addition, teachers who demonstrate environmentally responsible attitudes and behaviors may be role models for their students and increase their ability to guide students in actions to address complex environmental issues.

> Models environmental education pedagogy
Facilitators/trainers should utilize the same techniques and experiences in trainings that teachers are expected to use with their students, such as hands-on, place-based, outdoor field experiences and environmental issue investigation and action.

> Allows for adequate instructional time
Professional Development trainings should be multi-day, occurring consecutively or over the course of several months. Trainings should include ample opportunity for teachers to reflect on their own teaching practices and planning for how to use knowledge and skills gained from professional development in the classroom.

> Provides ongoing teacher support and appropriate incentives
Even in cases where teachers participate in robust multi-day trainings, such as a summer or weekend courses, it is still essential that professional development providers have a structure in place for on-going teacher support and enrichment. This can take the form of follow up meetings, creating web-based forums for communication and feedback, establishing mentor teachers who can serve as points of contact, or including teams of teachers from one particular school. Continuing education credits and stipends can be used to encourage participation in on-going professional development opportunities. Outreach and training opportunities for school administrators may help increase high level support for both environmental education and continuing teacher professional development for teachers.

> Meets jurisdictional guidelines for effective teacher professional development
Each jurisdiction has established guidance and recommendations germane to all forms of teacher professional development. When possible, professional development opportunities in environmental education should adhere to these general guidelines set forth by local education agencies.

B. Program Priorities

Proposals must address one of the four areas of interest (described below in detail):

1) Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for Students;
2) Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for Students focused on the issue of

Ocean Acidification;
3) Exemplary Programs combining Teacher Professional Development with long-term classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for their students; or
4) Exemplary Programs focused on the issue of ocean acidification combining Teacher Professional Development with long-term classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for their students.

Priority will be given to Exemplary Programs (Program Priority areas of interest 3 and 4) that combine Teacher Professional Development with long-term classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences. Additional priority will be given to programs focused on the issue of ocean acidification.

All proposals submitted, regardless of the area of interest, should address the following universal elements:

- Involve external sharing and communication.

Projects should promote peer-to-peer sharing and emphasize the need for external sharing and communication. Projects should include a mechanism that encourages the students to share their experiences with other students or with the community, e.g., through a mentoring program, newsletters, journals, or community presentations.

- Demonstrate partnerships.

Project proposals should include multiple partners. A partnership is a collaborative working relationship between two or more organizations. All partners should be actively involved in the project, not just supply equipment or curricula. Letters from each partner must be submitted with the application package to demonstrate the level of commitment and involvement.

- Be aligned to state learning standards.

- Be aligned to the NOAA Education Plan.

NOAA Education Plan: http://www.education.noaa.gov/noaa_educ.html

- Be aligned to environmental literacy principles, as appropriate.

"Ocean Literacy: Essential Principles of Ocean Sciences"
http://oceanliteracy.wp2.coexploration.org/

"Climate Literacy: The Essential Principles of Climate Science"

http://www.climate.noaa.gov/education/

Proposals must address one of the four areas of interest: (1) Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for Students; (2) Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for Students focused on the issue of Ocean Acidification; (3) Exemplary Programs combining Teacher Professional Development with long-term classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for their students; and (4) Exemplary Programs focused on the issue of ocean acidification combining Teacher Professional Development with long-term classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for their students. Each of these four priorities is described below.

1. Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for Students

The NOAA B-WET Program seeks proposals for projects that provide opportunities for students to participate in a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience. The marine and estuarine environment and the surrounding watershed provide excellent opportunities for environmental education. In many cases, tidal and non-tidal waters and the landscape around them can provide "hands-on" laboratories where students can see, touch, and learn about the environment. In other cases, the environment can be brought alive to the classroom through a strong complement of outdoor and classroom experiences. The ocean and watershed environment can provide genuine, locally relevant sources of knowledge that can be used to help advance student learning skills across the entire school curriculum. Proposals submitted under this area should address the specific elements and types of activities that define a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (definition above).

2. Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for Students focused on the issue of Ocean Acidification

The NOAA B-WET Program seeks proposals for projects that provide opportunities for students to participate in a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences focused on the issue of Ocean Acidification. Our carbon emissions are making the ocean more acidic, which threatens life in our coastal seas that we rely upon and are intimately connected to. Education is vital to improving the public's awareness and understanding of this phenomenon called ocean acidification. This includes not only increasing the general awareness of ocean acidification, but also increasing the understanding of the scientific knowledge and impacts of the ocean's changing chemistry. The need to broaden education and engage students about ocean education is a main goal of NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. The marine and estuarine environment and the surrounding watershed provide excellent opportunities for environmental education related to ocean acidification. In many cases, tidal

and non-tidal waters and the landscape around them can provide "hands-on" laboratories where students can see, touch, and learn about the environment. In other cases, the environment can be brought alive to the classroom through a strong complement of outdoor and classroom experiences. The ocean and watershed environment can provide genuine, locally relevant sources of knowledge that can be used to help advance student learning skills across the entire school curriculum. Proposals submitted under this area should address the specific elements and types of activities that define a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (definition above).

3. Exemplary Programs combining Teacher Professional Development and Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for their Students

The NOAA B-WET Program seeks proposals for projects that combine Teacher Professional Development with long-term classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for their Students. Systematic, long-term professional development for teachers coupled with multiple meaningful watershed experiences for students that are fully supported in the classroom by their teachers will ensure that the concepts of watershed education are fully reinforced throughout the school year. Professional development opportunities should be designed so that teachers not only understand what a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience is, but why this type of pedagogy is important. The goal is to ensure that professional development experiences for the teacher ultimately benefit the student. Projects should be designed so that teachers are capable of conducting meaningful watershed educational experiences and provide the resources and necessary technical support needed to implement an experience in their classroom. Proposals submitted under this area should address the specific elements and types of activities that define a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (definition above).

4. Exemplary Programs focused on the issue of ocean acidification combining Teacher Professional Development and Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for their Students

The NOAA B-WET Program seeks proposals for projects focused on the issue of ocean acidification that combine Teacher Professional Development with long-term classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for their Students. Our carbon emissions are making the ocean more acidic, which threatens life in our coastal seas that we rely upon and are intimately connected to. Education is vital to improving the public's awareness and understanding of this phenomenon called ocean acidification. This includes not only increasing the general awareness of ocean acidification, but also increasing the understanding of the scientific knowledge and impacts of the ocean's changing chemistry.

The need to broaden education and engage students about ocean education is a main goal of NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. Systematic, long-term professional development for teachers coupled with multiple meaningful watershed experiences for students that are fully supported in the classroom by their teachers will ensure that the concepts of watershed and ocean acidification education are fully reinforced throughout the school year. Professional development opportunities should be designed so that teachers not only understand what a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience is, but why this type of pedagogy is important. The goal is to ensure that professional development experiences for the teacher ultimately benefit the student. Projects should be designed so that teachers are capable of conducting meaningful watershed educational experiences and provide the resources and necessary technical support needed to implement an experience in their classroom. Proposals submitted under this area should address the specific elements and types of activities that define a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (definition above).

C. Program Authority

Under 33 U.S.C. § 893a(a), the America COMPTES Act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is authorized to conduct, develop, support, promote, and coordinate formal and informal educational activities at all levels to enhance public awareness and understanding of ocean, coastal, Great Lakes, and atmospheric science and stewardship by the general public and other coastal stakeholders, including underrepresented groups in ocean and atmospheric science and policy careers. In conducting those activities, the Administrator shall build upon the educational programs and activities of the agency.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

It is anticipated that approximately $450,000 will be available in FY 2017 to fund eligible applications. NOAA anticipates making approximately 8 to 9 new awards. The total Federal amount that may be requested from NOAA should not exceed $60,000. The minimum Federal amount to request from NOAA is $25,000. NOAA does not expect to consider applications requesting Federal support from NOAA for more than $60,000 or less than $25,000.

B. Project/Award Period

The project start date should not begin before July 1, 2017. The period of awards may be for a maximum period of up to 12 months. Applications must include a project description

and a budget for the entire award period. Applicants selected to receive funding may be asked to modify the project start date. It is recommended to include the flexibility of the requested start date in your project description.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Proposals selected for funding will be funded through a grant or cooperative agreement depending upon the amount of collaboration, participation, or involvement of NOAA in the management of the project. A cooperative agreement will be used if the NOAA B-WET Program shares responsibility for management, control, direction, or performance of the project with the recipient. Specific terms regarding substantial involvement will be contained in special award conditions.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are K-12 public and independent schools and school systems, institutions of higher education, community-based and nonprofit organizations, state or local government agencies, interstate agencies, and Indian tribal governments. For-profit organizations, foreign organizations, and foreign public entities are not eligible to apply; however, for-profit and foreign organizations and foreign public entities may participate as a project partner with an eligible applicant. Federal agencies are not allowed to receive funds under this announcement but may serve as collaborative project partners and may contribute services in kind. Individuals are not eligible to apply. While applicants do not need to be located in the targeted geographical regions specified in the program objectives, the primary participants of the projects must be located in the geographical regions specified in the program objectives.

Additionally, priority will be given to applicants who 1) serve underserved or underrepresented audiences, 2) show prior experience in working in the Pacific Northwest region, and / or 3) demonstrate partnerships with local organizations in the Pacific Northwest region on proposed projects.

The Department of Commerce/NOAA is strongly committed to broadening the participation of historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions, tribal colleges and universities, and institutions that work in underserved areas. The NOAA B-WET program encourages proposals involving any of the above institutions as well as other organizations that work with underserved or underrepresented audiences.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

No cost sharing is required under this program. Applicants may demonstrate cost sharing, third party in-kind match, and program leveraging to support their projects, but this is not included in the eligibility or evaluation criteria. Funds from other Federal sources may not be considered matching funds and may not be used under this award unless expressly authorized by statute. All cost sharing or matching must be consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR §200.306.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

No other criteria.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply online through Grants.gov. You may access the electronic grant application for the Pacific Northwest Bay Watershed Education and Training Program at http://www.grants.gov.

Please note that applicants must locate the downloadable application package for this program by the FFO number (found on the first page of the FFO) or CFDA number (11.429). Users of Grants.gov will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it off line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov website. When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site as well as the hours of operation. We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov.

If an applicant has problems downloading, please contact 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov. For non-Windows computer systems, please see http://www.grants.gov/MacSupport for information on how to download and submit an application through Grants.gov.

Applicants unable to effectively access application materials electronically should refer to a NOAA official listed in Section VII. of this Announcement to obtain the application materials.

B. Content and Form of Application

Proposals should follow the content and format described below. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of the Pacific Northwest B-WET, Olympic Coast

National Marine Sanctuary or the reviewers as to the relative merits of the project described in the application. Some helpful resources for applicants can be found here: http://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet/apply#APP

1. Format Requirements:

All pages should be single-spaced and should be composed in at least 11 point font with one-inch margins on 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper. The project description should not exceed 15 pages, exclusive of project summary, literature cited, budget information (including indirect cost rate), resumes of investigator(s), letters of support, data sharing plan, National Environmental Policy Act questionnaire, and federal forms. Any attachment included in an electronic application should meet the above format requirement when printed out. All documents submitted as electronic application elements should be PDF (rather than MS Word, Excel, MOV, or other files types).

2. Content Requirements:

The following Federal Forms are required and must be submitted with applications.
(1) Application for Federal Assistance: SF-424. Funding on this form should reflect the total funding requested in the application.
(2) Budget Information, Non-construction Programs: SF-424A.
(3) Assurances, Non-Construction Programs: SF-424B
Additionally, the following Department of Commerce forms may be required:
(4) Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and other Responsibility Matters: Drug Free Workplace Environment: CD-511
(5) Disclosure of Lobbying Activities: SF-LLL (if applicable).

The following information should be included.
a. Project Summary (1-page limit): It is critical that the project summary accurately describes the project being proposed and conveys all essential elements and objectives of the activities. A person unfamiliar with your project should be able to read the summary and grasp your plan. The project summary should include: Organization title; Principal Investigator(s); Address, telephone number, and email address of Principal Investigator(s); Program priority addressed as described in Section I.B. (Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for Students; Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for Students focused on the issue of Ocean Acidification; Exemplary Programs combining Teacher Professional Development with long-term classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for their students; or Exemplary Programs focused on the issue of ocean acidification combining Teacher Professional Development with long-term classroom-

integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for their students); Project title; Project duration; Project objectives; Total Federal funding requested; Cost-sharing to be provided from non-Federal sources if any; Cost per student and/or teacher; and Succinct description of work to be performed during the entire project period including audience description information (i.e. demographics and school districts, grade levels, number of teachers/students to be reached) and delivery method to be used (e.g. workshops, field experiences, interactive programs).

b. Project Description (15-page limit): The project description should describe and justify the project being proposed and address each of the evaluation criteria as described below in Section V.A.

Project descriptions should include the goals and objectives for your project. Include specific approaches to achieving those objectives, including methods, timelines, and expected outcomes. Include information about how the project contributes to greater understanding and stewardship of the watershed and coastal systems and processes.

Describe the need for your project and cite timely studies or sources, where appropriate, that verify the need for your project.

Project descriptions should define the target audience(s). Specifically, project descriptions should include a precise location of the project and area(s) to be served and the number of teachers and/or students to be reached each year of the proposed project. Demonstrate an understanding of the needs of that audience, including anything that makes your target audience unique.

Project descriptions should outline how the project proposes to implement each component of a meaningful watershed educational experience (fully defined above), including issue definition and background research, outdoor field activities, stewardship action projects, synthesis and conclusions based on observations and activities, integration with classroom curriculum, and use of the local context for learning. Note what NOAA products, services, or staff will be used in program delivery. Discuss a plan for sustainability of project beyond NOAA funding.

Project descriptions should include significant external sharing, communication, and stewardship. Projects should include a mechanism that encourages students and/or teachers to share their experiences with peers and with the environmental education community, e.g., through mentoring opportunities, presentations at conferences, in-school service days, or other public forums, media, or other community stewardship activities.

Project descriptions should also identify and document the results or benefits to be derived from the proposed activities. Project descriptions should include a two part evaluation description as explained below. No more than 10% of the project costs should be spent on the evaluation components of your proposal.

(1) Project-level Evaluation: Project-level evaluation is defined as the systematic collection and documentation of information about your project's outcomes in order to improve the project's effectiveness, guide judgments about its impact, and/or inform decisions about future programming or funding. Proposals should provide a project evaluation plan. For information on how to create a project evaluation plan, please see the California B-WET project evaluation website at http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/evaluation/welcome.html.

and

(2) National Evaluation: In addition to project evaluation, grantees will be asked to participate in data collection for the national B-WET evaluation. The B-WET national evaluation consists of two parts; part 1 is for all recipients of B-WET grants while part 2 is only for programs that work with teachers. The B-WET national evaluation is intended to monitor program implementation and outcomes on an ongoing basis. Results of this evaluation will be used to improve the B-WET program, document its value, and better tailor it to program audiences. Grantees with teacher participants will be able to view a summary of responses from their participating teachers. Success of this effort depends on grantee participation, so applicants are strongly encouraged to review the information about the national evaluation system (available here: http://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet/grantee-resources/national-evaluation) and consider how they can support it as part of their projects.

National Evaluation Part 1 (for all B-WET grantees): As part of this evaluation system, one individual from each recipient organization will be asked to voluntarily complete an online questionnaire once per year of the award. The questionnaire should be able to be completed within 30-60 minutes (depending on the nature of the program) and may require some internal data compilation.

National Evaluation Part 2 (for programs with teacher professional development): For projects that work extensively with teachers, the teacher-participants will be asked to complete one questionnaire at the close of their professional development and one after implementing Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences with their students (at the end

of the following school year). Each teacher questionnaire should be able to be completed within 30 minutes. Along with completing the recipient questionnaire, grantees will be asked to provide the email addresses of participating teachers (after notifying teachers that their email will be shared) and to encourage teachers to participate in the national evaluation.

B-WET grantees and teachers who respond to the questionnaires will remain anonymous to B-WET and NOAA. NOAA will only view the resulting data in aggregate at the national or regional level; however, grantees will receive a password-protected report link to allow them to view data from teacher participants of their project in aggregate.

All applicants should provide information about how they plan to support this national evaluation system, incorporate it into the project timeline, and ensure responses from participating teachers as part of their application. Applicants may incorporate staff time required to complete the B-WET national evaluation in their budget proposal. More information, including all of the survey instruments, is available on the NOAA B-WET National Evaluation website here: http://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet/grantee-resources/national-evaluation. Grantees should review the information available and take this into consideration in the planning for their project evaluations. For example: Grantees may not need to include questions that will be answered through the teacher instrument in their own evaluations.

Wherever possible grantees should try to incorporate participation in the evaluation system into existing requirements for professional development program completion. For example, on completion of the teacher professional development survey, teachers will receive some program incentive.

Note that this evaluation system is not intended to replace project level evaluation. While grantees will have access to their teacher's results from the evaluation system, the national evaluation may not provide the level of detail needed to fully understand, describe, and improve specific grant projects. Grantees are therefore encouraged to balance these needs within their planning and budgeting process.

Additional information about this project, including background, FAQs, survey instruments, and suggested text for communicating with your teacher participants about this project, is available here: http://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet/grantee-resources/national-evaluation

This data collection will be conducted in a manner consistent with OMB guidelines (OMB

Control No 0648-0658).

c. Literature Cited: If references are cited, proposals should include a literature cited list.

d. Letters of Support/Partnerships: Letters of support from each partner that is making a significant contribution to the project should be included with the application package. Wherever reasonable, proposals should include partnerships with school divisions and/or the state department of education (if the applicant is not one of these entities). Projects are also encouraged to collaborate with NOAA entities as partners. More information about NOAA assets and educational resources can be found at: http://www.noaa.gov/education and http://www.noaa.gov/office-education/grants/noaa-assets.

e. Budget and Budget Justification: In addition to the SF424A Budget Information form, applicants should include a detailed budget justification, or budget narrative. In the budget narrative, include a per-teacher and/or per-student cost calculation for this project. Provide justification for all budget items in sufficient detail to enable the reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the funding requested. Also, applicants should complete and submit the B-WET budget template found at http://olympiccoast.noaa.gov/ocean_literacy/bwet.html . All budget information submitted with the application should mirror the dollar amounts on required SF-424 and SF-424A forms. All budget items should be rounded to the nearest dollar.

For any equipment, defined in 2 CFR §200.33 as “tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or $5,000,” a description of the item and associated costs is required, including a description of how it will be used in the project. For more information on equipment, see 2 CFR §200.313

Applicants must include the budgets and budget justifications of sub-awards and information supporting the price or cost of contracts. Information must include, to the extent known, the name of the entity receiving funds, the location of the entity receiving the funds (e.g., city, state, and Congressional district), the location of the entity receiving funds (city, state, and Congressional district), and the location of the primary place of performance under the contract/sub-award. All sub-awards and contracts must be made consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR §§200.330-200.332 for sub-awards, and 200.317-200.326 for procurements.

If applicants proposing indirect costs have a current Federally-approved rate, a copy should

be included with the budget narrative. Refer to Sections IV.F. and VI.B.10. of this Announcement for additional information about indirect costs.

Grant recipients may be asked to attend a two-day Regional B-WET conference to be held in Oregon or Washington during the award period. The conference will be an opportunity for former and current B-WET grant recipients to present their B-WET projects and learn from each other. Your budget should include, in the travel category, estimated funds for this trip (such as meals, lodging, airfare and/or other transportation including rental car, shuttle, or taxi). Although this is considered an outreach and education opportunity, it should not be the sole justification to meet the outreach and education criteria; local, regional or national communication is required as well.

f. Resumes (2 pages maximum for each major participant)

g. Data Sharing:

> Data Management Plan
Proposals submitted in response to this announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages. This Data Management Plan does not count against the 15-page Project Description page limit. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the NOAA B-WET Data Management Guidance provided below and will be considered as part of proposal review. NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Management Plan from funded proposals, or use information from the Data Management Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data. Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal.

> Data Management Guidance to Applicants
The NOAA B-WET program has developed this guidance to help grant applicants plan to share quality environmental data collected as part of their B-WET funded projects, where applicable. Environmental Data are defined by NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 212-15: Management of Environmental Data and Information as recorded and derived observations and measurements of the physical, chemical, biological, geological, and geophysical properties and conditions of the oceans, atmosphere, space environment, sun, and solid earth, as well as correlative data such as socio-economic data, related documentation, and metadata. Digital audio or video recordings of environmental phenomena (such as animal

sounds or undersea video) are included in this definition. Numerical model outputs are included in this definition, particularly if they are used to support the conclusion of a peer-reviewed publication. Data collected in a laboratory or other controlled environment, such as measurements of animals and chemical processes, are included in this definition.

Environmental data and information collected or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the general public, in a timely fashion (typically within two years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, unless an exemption is granted by the NOAA Program. Data should be available in at least one machine-readable format, preferably a widely-used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine-readable documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely-used or international standards.

Proposals submitted in response to this announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements apply to the proposed project and will be satisfied. The Data Management Plan will be considered as part of the proposal review. Note that the Federal Program Officer may require revisions to the applicant’s Data Management Plan prior to recommending the application for funding.

Applicant Data Management Plans should be aligned with the following Data Management Guidance.

If environmental data collected/generated as part of the project are primarily for education and/or the practice of making observations using scientific techniques/methods (e.g. measuring pH of water with a refractometer, measuring atmospheric humidity with a sling psychrometer, measuring percent vegetative cover using a transect, etc.) and are not intended to be shared with scientists outside of the educational program, applicants may request permission not to make data publicly accessible and obtain approval from the Federal Program Officer, if funded. In this case, this element of the application should consist of a paragraph (under the heading "Data Management Plan") describing the intended use of the data and that an exemption from data sharing is requested.

If environmental data collected/generated as part of the project are for purposes beyond education and/or the practice of making observations using scientific techniques/methods, applicants should describe (up to 2 pages, under the heading "Data Management Plan") how data will be shared, based on the following guidance:

Contents: A typical Data Management Plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project;

the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The plan should describe or reference the data quality control techniques that will be used or note that the data will not be quality controlled. Data that is not quality controlled should include a description on the limitations of the data or an indication of degree of uncertainty.

Technical recommendations: The NOAA B-WET program does not offer specific technical guidance. Applicants should describe their proposed approach. Use of open-standard formats and methods is encouraged.

Data Accessibility: The NOAA B-WET program recommends that public access to grant-produced data be enabled via an existing publicly accessible online data server at the funded institution is to be used to host these data (describe in application); or a public data repository appropriate to this scientific domain (describe in application). (e.g. The GLOBE Program - http://www.globe.gov/, CoCoRaHS Community - http://www.cocorahs.org/); or recipient-established data hosting capability (please describe in application’s Data Management Plan).

Resources: Proposals are permitted to include the costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving in their budgets.

> Questions Regarding This Guidance
Responsible NOAA Official for questions regarding this guidance and for verifying accessibility of data produced by funding recipients:

Kevin Grant
NOAA Pacific Northwest B-WET Grants Manager
NOAA Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary
Kevin.Grant@noaa.gov
360-457-6622 ext. 15

Jacqueline Laverdure
NOAA Pacific Northwest B-WET Program Coordinator
NOAA Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Jacqueline.Laverdure@noaa.gov
360-457-6622 ext. 21

Bronwen Rice
NOAA B- WET National Coordinator

NOAA Office of Education
Bronwen.Rice@noaa.gov
202- 482-6797

Refer to Section VI.B.6. of this Announcement for more information about NOAA's Data Sharing Policy.

h. National Environmental Policy Act Questionnaire (if applicable)
NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Consequently, if your project may trigger consideration under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), identify any impact the proposed work will have on the quality of the environment by completing the NOAA NEPA Questionnaire at the following link (http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/questionnaire.pdf) and include it as an appendix to your application. This NEPA appendix does not count against the 15-page Project Description page limit. Refer to Section VI.B.5. of this Announcement for additional information about NEPA.

C. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Per the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, the use of a universal identifier to build the quality of information available to the public is required. Any application awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and Federal System for Award Management to the extent applicable. Each applicant (unless an exception arises under 2 C.F.R. 25) is required to: (i) be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier (e.g. DUNS number) in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

NOAA may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time NOAA is ready to make a Federal award, NOAA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant. See 2 C.F.R. Part 25, http://go.usa.gov/cTbMk.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m., Pacific Time on January 4th, 2017 to be

considered for funding. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected without further consideration.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply online through Grants.gov. For applications submitted through Grants.gov, a date and time receipt indication is included and will be the basis of determining timeliness.

If Grants.gov has technical issues that prohibit submission or use of Grants.gov is otherwise not feasible, hard copy applications will be accepted. Hard copies may be submitted by postal mail, commercial delivery service, or hand-delivery. Mail hard copy applications to Kevin Grant, NOAA Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, 115 East Railroad Avenue, Suite #301, Port Angeles, WA 98362. Hard copy applications must be received (not postmarked) by 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time on January 4th, 2017. Hard copy applications arriving after the deadline given above will be accepted for review only if the applicant can document that the application was provided to a delivery service that guaranteed delivery prior to the specified closing date and time. Hard copy applications received by Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary office later than two business days following the closing date will not be accepted.

Additional information about Grants.gov submissions:

Applicants are strongly encouraged not to wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov. Validation or rejection of your application by Grants.gov may take up to 2 business days after submission. Because first-time registration with Grants.gov can take up to three weeks or more, it is strongly recommended that this registration process be completed as soon as possible. Also, even if an applicant has registered with Grants.gov previously, the applicant's password may have expired or their registration may need to be renewed prior to submitting to Grants.gov. Grants.gov will not accept submissions if the applicant has not been authorized or if credentials are incorrect. Authorizations and credential corrections can take several days to establish. Please consider these notes in developing your submission timeline.

If you experience a Grants.gov “systems issue” (technical problems or glitches with the Grants.gov website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission before an applicable funding cycle deadline, please (i) print any error message received; and (ii) call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. Ensure that you obtain a case number regarding your communications with Grants.gov. Please note: problems with an applicant organization’s computer system or equipment are not considered “systems issues.” Similarly, an applicant’s failure to: (i) complete the required registration,

(ii) ensure that a registered Authorized Organization Representative submits the application, or (iii) receive an email message from Grants.gov are not considered systems issues. A Grants.gov “systems issue” is an issue occurring in connection with the operations of Grants.gov system, such as the temporary loss of service by Grants.gov due to unexpected volume of traffic or failure of information technology systems, both of which are highly unlikely. In the event of a confirmed “systems issue,” NOAA may allow more time for applicant submission due to system problems at Grants.gov at the time of application submission that are beyond the control of the applicant.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications submitted by state and local governments are subject to the provisions of Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. Any applicant submitting an application for funding is required to complete item 16 on SF-424 regarding clearance by the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) established as a result of E.O. 12372. To find out about and comply with a State's process under EO 12372, the names, addresses and phone numbers of participating SPOCs are listed in the Office of Management and Budget's home page at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc.

F. Funding Restrictions

Indirect Costs - The budget may include an amount for indirect costs if your organization has an established indirect cost rate with the Federal government. If indirect costs are requested, indirect-cost-rate agreements must be included for the applicant organization and the negotiated rate must be requested. If an applicant does not have an indirect cost rate and wants to include indirect costs, the applicant has up to 90 days after the award start date to submit an indirect cost proposal or cost allocation plan. Indirect-cost-rate-agreement documentation is not required for sub-awardees, however indirect cost rates at the negotiated levels should be paid by the primary awardee. Under 2 C.F.R. § 200.414 “Indirect (F&A) Costs,” any applicant that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs which may be used indefinitely. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.403 “Factors affecting allowability of costs.” If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a cooperator chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time. The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions Section B.06. The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is: Lamar Revis, Grants Officer; NOAA Grants Management Division; 1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor; Silver Spring, Maryland 20910; lamar.revis@noaa.gov.

Construction is not an allowable activity under this program. Therefore, applications will not be accepted for construction projects.

All costs must be reasonable, allowable and allocable. Details about allowable costs can be found in 2 CFR part 200, Subpart E "Cost Principles."

G. Other Submission Requirements

Not applicable.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

1. Importance and/or relevance and applicability of proposal to the program goals (35 points)

This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state, or local activities. The projects importance and/ or relevance and applicability of the proposal to the program goals will be scored using the following measures:

a) MWEEs for students are learner centered and focused on questions, problems, and issues to be investigated through collecting, analyzing and sharing data; learning protocols; exploring models; and examining natural phenomena. (15 of 35 points)

i. Students are instructed about basic watershed concepts, as well as the interaction between natural systems (e.g. wildlife, plants, and water cycle) and social systems (e.g. communities, transportation systems, and schools), highlighting the connection between human activity and environmental conditions.

ii. Students focus on a local environmental question, problem, or issue requiring background research and investigation;

iii. Students participate in multiple outdoor field activities sufficient to collect the data or make observations required for answering the research questions and informing student actions, or as part of the issue definition and background research;

iv. Students participate in age appropriate stewardship action projects that address environmental issues at the personal or societal level;

v. Students analyze and evaluate the results of projects and investigations.

b) MWEE is an integral part of the instructional program. (10 of 35 points)

i. Project is part of the classroom instruction, not an ancillary event;

ii. Project uses the local community and environment for learning;
iii. Experiences are a set of activities over time;
iv. Project includes NOAA assets, including personnel and resources;
v. Project is aligned with the state learning standards;
vi. Project is multi-disciplinary.

c) Project includes Teacher Professional Development to support MWEEs. (5 of 35 points)
i. Training increases teachers' knowledge and awareness of environmental issues;
ii. Training incorporates the same techniques and experiences that teachers are expected to use with their students, such as hands-on, place-based, outdoor field experiences and environmental issue investigation and action;
iii. Training is multi-day, occurring consecutively or over the course of several months;
iv. Project providers offer ongoing teacher support and appropriate incentives for teachers.

d) Project focuses on the issue of ocean acidification. (5 of 35 points)
i. Applicant demonstrates how the project will increase the understanding of the scientific knowledge and impacts of ocean acidification during MWEE.

2. Technical merit (30 points)

This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. Technical merit will be scored using the following measures:
a) Proposal meets all technical requirements and objectives. (10 of 30 points)
i. Proposal meets all requirements formatting requirements;
ii. Project description is clearly defined in sufficient detail and realistic;
iii. Project serves underserved or underrepresented audiences;
iv. Objectives are clearly focused and well defined;
v. Objectives are realistic and attainable;
vi. Objectives are measurable;
vii. Project is likely to achieve stated objectives and outcomes.

b) Applicant demonstrates how the project is aligned to NOAA Education Plan, Ocean Literacy and Climate Literacy. (5 of 30 points)
i. Applicant demonstrates how their project is aligned and supports one or more of the goals and strategies of the NOAA Education Plan;
ii. Applicant demonstrates how their project is aligned with one or more of the

fundamental principles of Ocean Literacy;
iii. Applicant demonstrates how their project is aligned with one or more of the fundamental principles of Climate Literacy;

c) Applicant demonstrates partnerships through letters of support and partner involvement. (5 of 30 points)
i. Applicant demonstrates partnerships with local organizations in the Pacific Northwest region on proposed projects
ii. Each partner contributes to the program;
iii. Applicant has letters of support from each partner, including NOAA partner;
iv. One or more partners are from the school district;
v. Partners involved in the project are qualified.

d) Applicant demonstrates how the project outcomes will be evaluated. (10 of 30 points)
i. The evaluation focuses on measuring changes in participants;
ii. The evaluation focuses on methods for gathering data that are systematic and replicable;
iii. The results can be used to inform programming decisions;
iv. The indicators of outcomes are appropriate for the project;
v. The data gathering instruments are appropriate for the audience and the outcomes to be measured;
vi. The results of the evaluation will help guide the assessments of the project's effectiveness, impact and/or value;
vii. Applicant provides information about how they plan to support the national evaluation system, incorporates it into the project timeline, and ensures responses from participating teachers as part of their application.

3. Overall qualifications of applicants (10 points)

This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. Overall qualifications of applicants will be scored using the following measures, which are weighted holistically:
i. Applicant shows the capability and experience in successfully completing similar projects ;
ii. Proposal includes resumes of the staff members involved in the project ;
iii. Applicant demonstrates knowledge of the target audience;
iv. Applicant shows prior experience in working in the Pacific Northwest region.

4. Project costs (15 points)

This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame. Project costs will be scored using the following measures, which are weighted holistically:

i. Budget request is reasonable and justifiable;

ii. Significant percentage of the budget is directly related to bringing students in contact with the environment;

iii. Any administrative costs are consistent with Federal requirements and effectively support project implementation;

iv. Funds for salaries and fringe benefits are only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the proposed project;

v. Applicant demonstrates sustainability beyond the project period and that the project will continue after NOAA funding has expired.

5. Outreach and education (10 points)

This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources. Outreach and education will be scored using the following measures, which are weighted holistically:

i. Project involves well-developed external sharing and communications

ii. Proposal describes how target audience will share their findings, experiences, or results to their peers or their community.

B. Review and Selection Process

After the application period has closed, we will screen received applications to ensure that they were received by the deadline date (see IV.D. Submission Dates and Times); were submitted by an eligible applicant (see III.A. Eligibility Information); address one of the priorities (see I.B. Program Priorities); include required content (see IV.B. Content and Form of Application); and meet the federal funding requirements (II.A. Funding Availability). If your application does not conform to the requirements and the deadline for submission has passed, the application will be rejected without further consideration. NOAA, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that may be easily rectified or cured.

Applications responsive to this solicitation will be evaluated by a two-part review process; a preliminary technical review and a panel review. Both phases are conducted by the same set

of private and/or public sector expert reviewers. Each review phase is described in detail below.

Technical Review:

The purpose of the technical review is to evaluate each proposal's technical merit via individual evaluations of the proposals. Each application will be reviewed by a minimum of 3 reviewers. Reviewers provide comments (which are shared with applicants after the competition has concluded) and assign scores to the applications based the evaluation criteria in Section V.A. of this federal funding opportunity. If more than one non-Federal reviewer is used, no consensus advice will be given.

The Federal Program Officer will establish a preliminary rank order based on the individual reviewers' ratings.

This preliminary rank order will be used in the subsequent panel meeting where final funding recommendations are made.

Panel Review:

A review panel will convene to evaluate the rankings and comments from the Technical Review and discuss the proposals as a group. During the panel meeting, reviewers can revise their scores and comments. Reviewers must individually submit final ranking to the B-WET Program Manager by the end of the panel meeting. If more than one non-Federal reviewer is used, no consensus advice will be given by the review panel members. The reviewers' final ranking will be averaged for each application to produce a rank order of the proposals for each of the panels.

Renewal proposals will be considered for renewal based on the comments and feedback from the panel meeting and will be independently recommended with either a yes- renew, or a no- do not fund/renew. New proposals and proposals considered for renewal will be scored using the same criteria as outlined above, but renewal proposals may be given priority over new proposals as described in Section V.C. below.

Using the recommendation on each discussed proposal, the Program Manager will calculate a "percent recommended" for each discussed proposal. This establishes a final rank order for funding that is provided to the Selecting Official.

In the event that there are two or more projects tied in the final rank order that are competing

for the final available funds, the technical review scores will determine the rank order. If a tie persists beyond this, all tied projects will be given equal consideration by the Selecting Official. The Selecting Official will resolve any ties by selecting projects based on the selection factors listed in Section V.C. of this federal funding opportunity.

NOAA may select all, some, or none of the applications, or part of any application, ask applicants to work together or combine projects, defer applications to the future, or reallocate funds to different funding categories, to the extent authorized. Applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans or budgets, and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to the award. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the project duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement with the activities of each project will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the NOAA Grants Office, and NOAA program staff.

The NOAA Grants Officer will review financial and grants administration aspects of a proposed award, including conducting an assessment of the risk posed by the applicant in accordance with 2 C.F.R. 200.205. In addition to reviewing repositories of government-wide eligibility, qualifications or financial integrity information, the risk assessment conducted by NOAA may consider items such as the financial stability of an applicant, quality of the applicant's management systems, an applicant's history of performance, previous audit reports and audit findings concerning the applicant and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-federal entities. Upon review of these factors, if appropriate, specific award conditions that respond to the degree of risk may be applied by the NOAA Grants Officer pursuant to 2 C.F.R. 200.207. In addition, NOAA reserves the right to reject an application in its entirety where information is uncovered that raises a significant risk with respect to the responsibility or suitability of an applicant. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the NOAA Grants Officer. The award decision of the Grants Officer is final and there is no right of appeal.

C. Selection Factors

The Pacific Northwest B-WET Panel ratings will be provided in rank order to the Selecting Official for final funding recommendations. The Selecting Official shall award in the rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based on the following factors:

1. Availability of funding;

2. Balance/distribution of funds:

a. geographically
b. by type of institutions
c. by type of partners
d. by research areas
e. by project types

3. Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/federal agencies;

4. Program priorities and policy factors as set out in Section I.A. and I.B.;

5. Applicant's prior award performance;

6. Partnerships with/Participation of targeted groups;

7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer.

The Selecting Official may negotiate the funding level of the proposal. The Selecting Official makes final recommendations for awards to NOAA’s Grants Management Division who is authorized to obligate funds.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, review of proposals will occur during early 2017. Applicants may receive communications to negotiate a potential award in spring 2017. Funding is expected to begin August 1, 2017. The project start date should not begin before July 1, 2017.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive electronic notification that the application has been funded from the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification will be sent by email from Grants Online to the institution's Authorizing Official. The official notification of funding, signed by a NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin.

The official notice of award is the Standard Form CD-450, Financial Assistance Award,

issued by the NOAA Grants Officer electronically through NOAA's online grants management system, Grants Online. The CD-450 award cover page is available at http://go.usa.gov/SNMR. The Internet Explorer browser should be used with Grants Online. Also, each recipient will need to have a U.S. Treasury Automated Standard Application for Payment (ASAP) account in order to draw funds electronically.

The Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions will apply to awards in this program. A current version of this document is available at http://go.usa.gov/hKbj. These terms will be provided in the award package in Grants Online at http://www.ago.noaa.gov. In addition, award documents provided by NOAA in the Grants Online award package may contain special award conditions unique to this program and the applicant's project, including conditions that may limit the use of funds for activities due to outstanding environmental compliance requirements and may lead to modification of the project's scope of work. These special award conditions may also include other compliance requirements for the award, such as due diligence documentation, and will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review award documents carefully before accepting a Federal award to ensure they are fully aware of the relevant terms that have been placed on the award.

Successful applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of an award. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the collaboration duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement in the activities of each partnership will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the NOAA Grants Office and the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. Project activities should not be initiated in the expectation of Federal funding until a notice of award document is received from the NOAA Grants Office.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not recommended for funding (declined) or was not reviewed because it did not meet the minimum requirements prescribed in IV.B (Content and Form of Applications).

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Pre-Award Notification - The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390), are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf.

2. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements

The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, adopted by the Department of Commerce through 2 C.F.R. 1327.101, applies to awards in this program. Refer to http://go.usa.gov/SBYh and http://go.usa.gov/SBg4 .

3. The Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions will apply to awards in this program. A current version of this document is available at http://go.usa.gov/hKbj. In addition, award documents provided by NOAA may contain special award conditions, including those limiting the use of funds for compliance activities such as outstanding environmental compliance requirements, which will be applied on a case-by-case basis.

4. Limitation of Liability
Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of appropriations. In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for application preparation costs. Publication of this notice does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. If one incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, one would do so solely at one's own risk of these costs not being included under the award or of not receiving an award.

5. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA Web site at www.nepa.noaa.gov, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA at http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations website at https://ceq.doe.gov/ceq_regulations/regulations.html.

Consequently, applicants may be asked to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, number and species expected to be caught, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting of an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required.

Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to

reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. The failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the grants officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make as assessment of any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

If your project may trigger consideration under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), identify any impact the proposed work will have on the quality of the environment by completing the NOAA NEPA Questionnaire at the following link (http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/questionnaire.pdf) and include it as an appendix to your application.

This NEPA appendix does not count against the 15-page Project Description page limit.

6. Data Sharing Plan

a. Environmental data and information collected or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the general public, in a timely fashion (typically within two years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, unless an exemption is granted by the NOAA Program. Data should be available in at least one machine-readable format, preferably a widely-used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine-readable documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely used or international standards.

b. Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the Data Management Guidance provided by NOAA in the Announcement. The contents of the Data Management Plan (or absence thereof), and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets.

c. NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Management Plan

from funded proposals, or use information from the Data Management Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data.

d. Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal.

7. Confidentiality and Access to Information

Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this FFO may be subject to requests for release under FOIA. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information which is exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information. Based on these markings, the confidentiality of the contents of those pages will be protected to the extent permitted by law.

8. Felony and Tax Certifications

When applicable under appropriations law, NOAA will provide certain applicants a form to be completed by the applicant’s authorized representative making a certification regarding Federally-assessed unpaid or delinquent tax liability or recent felony criminal convictions under any Federal law. If a form is provided, an award may not be issued until it is returned and accepted by NOAA.

9. Review of Risk

After applications are proposed for funding by the selecting official, the Grants Office will perform administration reviews. These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant’s management systems, history of performance, and the applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) about any information included in the system about their organization for consideration by the awarding agency.

10. Indirect Cost Rate

If an applicant has not previously established an indirect cost rate with a Federal agency they may choose to negotiate a rate with the Department of Commerce or use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of MTDC (as allowable under 2 C.F.R., section 200.214). The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions.

The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is:

Lamar Revis, Grants Officer
NOAA Grants Management Division
1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Lamar.Revis@noaa.gov

C. Reporting

Unless otherwise specified by terms of the award, performance and financial reports are to be submitted semi-annually in accordance with 2 C.F.R. 200.327-.329 and the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, and must be submitted no later than 30 days following the end of each 6-month period. Reports shall be submitted electronically via the NOAA Grants Online system (https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov).

1. Financial Reports - Information about federal financial reports is available at: http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/grantsonline/Documents/Grantees/Manuals/FederalFinancialReports.pdf

2. Performance/Progress Reports - Suggested content and guidance related to Pacific B-WET performance/progress reports can be found here: http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/bwet/docs/grant_report_format.pdf

3. The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 Note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards of $25,000 and over.

VII. Agency Contacts

For questions regarding Pacific Northwest B-WET Program or the application process, you may contact:

Kevin Grant
Pacific Northwest B-WET Program Grant Manager
Kevin.Grant@noaa.gov
360-457-6622 ext. 15

Jacqueline Laverdure
Pacific Northwest B-WET Program Coordinator
Jacqueline.Laverdure@noaa.gov
(360) 457-6622 ext. 21

Or view http://olympiccoast.noaa.gov/ocean_literacy/bwet.html

VIII. Other Information

None.